

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 were presented for examination and were pending in this application. In the latest Office Action, claims 1-9 were rejected. With this amendment, claims 3, 4, 8, and 9 are amended, claim 2 is canceled, and new claims 10-21 are added. On the basis of the following remarks, consideration of this application and allowance of all pending claims are requested.

Claims 2 and 9 were rejected as not enabled by the specification and as indefinite. Applicant has canceled claim 2 and the subject matter in claim 9 to which the examiner objected. Accordingly, these rejections have been addressed.

Claims 1 and 8 were rejected as indefinite on the ground that the phrase “the computer chassis” rendered the claims indefinite as to whether a computer chassis was being claimed. With respect to claim 1, Applicant respectfully asserts that it is clear from the claim element, “a mechanism for securing the cover plate to a computer chassis,” that claim 1 uses the phrase “a computer chassis” to define the claimed securing mechanism. One of ordinary skill in the art would understand that a chassis itself is not claimed. With respect to claim 8, the claim has been amended to use the term “chassis” to define the claimed structure without actually claiming the chassis. Claims 1 and 8 particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention.

In the latest Office Action, each of the claims was rejected as anticipated or made obvious by U.S. Patent No. 5,926,916 to Lee et al. or U.S. Patent No. 5,116,261 to Lan et al., either alone or in combination with other references. Applicant respectfully asserts that amended claims 1 and 3-9, as well as new claims 10-21, are patentable over the cited references and any combination thereof.

The primary references, Lee and Lan, each describe a similar computer housing, which includes a front panel fixedly attached to or integral with a computer chassis. Although this front panel may be removed upon disassembly of the computer, the front panel in both Lee and Lan is not removed or opened during normal operation of the computer. For this reason, these panels do not cover computer drive interfaces. (Otherwise, a user would have to take apart the chassis just to insert a disk.) Instead, the front panels in Lee and in Lan each include a door that is hinged to the front panel, where the door can be opened to allow access to interface with computer drives. This simple door mechanism, as described in Lee and Lan, does not anticipate or render obvious the claimed subject matter.

The amended claims and the new claims generally recite an apparatus or computer system that includes a cover plate for covering the interfaces of computer drives. The cover plate is coupled to a computer chassis so that the cover plate may be opened to allow a user to access the computer drives, and then closed to protect the computer drives. The claims further recite that the cover plate includes a window, which allows a user to access at least one of the computer drives when the cover plate is closed. One embodiment of this claimed feature is illustrated in FIG. 1, where the cover plate (24) includes a window (25), which may be covered by a drive door (26). As the specification explains at ¶ 16, this particular configuration makes it possible for a user to access a more commonly used drive through the drive door — even when the cover plate is in the closed position. This may be advantageous for CD and DVD drives, for example, where a computer can eject or open the drive without manual interaction from the user. The window in the cover plate allows such a drive to open by passing through the window and drive door without requiring the user to open the cover plate manually before the CD or DVD drive ejects.

The other references cited in the Office Action were cited for their disclosure of dependent limitations. Accordingly, these references do not address the distinguishing limitations discussed above.

Based on the foregoing, the application is in condition for allowance of all claims, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the examiner believes for any reason direct contact would help advance the prosecution of this case to allowance, the examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,
YI-LUNG KUO

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